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FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4238  
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE  
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE  
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE  
RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE  
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 6249  
RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI 0021  
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 4493  
RHMCSUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
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SENSITIVE  
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C O R R E C T E D COPY (CAPTION)  
STATE FOR G-TIP AND SCA/CEN

E.O. 12958: N/A  
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TX, TK  
SUBJECT: REPORT OF TURKMEN TRAFFICKING VICTIM SELLING HIS  
KIDNEY

11. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public internet.

12. (SBU) According to a relative of a local Embassy employee, a desperate Turkmen trafficking victim in Turkey sold his kidney in order to obtain money to return home. The family of the young man from Mary province reported that he was trafficked to Turkey last year. While there, he became destitute, had no way to return home, and resorted to selling one of his kidneys. Not long after he returned to Turkmenistan last fall, he reportedly died from complications related to the surgery to extract the kidney. We have not been able to independently confirm the veracity of this account. According to the employee's source, who resides in the same village in Mary as the alleged trafficking victim, such occurrences -- Turkmen selling a kidney to a foreign recipient in exchange for two or three thousand dollars -- are becoming more common.

A PROMISE OF EMPLOYMENT -- FOR A FEE

13. (SBU) According to the source, the trafficking victim from Mary was a young, unemployed male in his twenties. He was reportedly recruited by an intermediary who offered to find him employment in a Turkish textile factory in exchange for a fee equivalent to USD 500. The victim traveled to Turkey, where he worked 16-hour days in a factory under difficult conditions. The factory owner/manager reportedly ceased payment of his salary as soon as the intermediary's fee was paid in full. Alone and destitute, with no prospect of returning to Turkmenistan (and also reluctant to return home empty-handed), the victim was approached by a Turkish individual who suggested he sell one of his kidneys for payment. The victim agreed, and later underwent surgery to extract the kidney, for which he was paid USD 2,000. He subsequently returned to Turkmenistan in poor health and later died of complications related to the surgery, according to our source.

14. (SBU) The same source told Embassy employee that he was aware of "many other, similar cases," both of young men trafficked into situations of forced labor in Turkey, and of destitute Turkmen who had sold a kidney for only a few thousand dollars. He said that Turkmen women, as well, were

being offered positions as nannies or caretakers for the elderly in Turkey under similar arrangements -- i.e. payment to an intermediary.

15. (SBU) COMMENT: This is the first we have heard of any cases of organ selling by Turkmen, a phenomenon normally associated with extreme poverty, and well-documented in countries such as India or Egypt. We will try to get confirmation that this indeed happened, as well as look into accounts that it is becoming more common among Turkmen labor migrants. END COMMENT.  
CURRAN